

## FRANK KNOWLES

DECEMBER 9 (legislative day, DECEMBER 7), 1943.—Ordered to be printed

MR. ELLENDER, from the Committee on Claims, submitted the following

### REPORT

[To accompany S. 1399]

The Committee on Claims, to whom was referred the bill (S. 1399) for the relief of Frank Knowles, having considered the same, report favorably thereon without amendment and recommend that the bill do pass.

The purpose of the proposed legislation is to appropriate to Frank Knowles, of Montgomery, Ala., the sum of \$110, in full satisfaction of his claim against the United States for compensation for loss of three typewriters owned by him which were destroyed by fire while on loan to the Work Projects Administration, at Opelika, Ala., on November 21, 1940.

#### STATEMENT OF FACTS

The evidence in the files of the Federal Works Agency discloses that three Government-owned typewriters were turned over to Frank Knowles for repairs; that, while the typewriters were being repaired, Frank Knowles furnished three Underwood typewriters to the Work Projects Administration for use until the repairs on the other machines were completed; that, on November 21, 1940, the building in which the Work Projects Administration office was located was destroyed by fire; and that the three typewriters loaned by Frank Knowles were also destroyed. It is the opinion of the Agency that the fire was an "unfortunate occurrence which resulted in the loss of three typewriters to Mr. Knowles through no act of his own. However, since the loss occurred while the typewriters were on loan to, and in the possession of, the Work Projects Administration, this Agency will interpose no objections to the enactment by the Congress of the proposed legislation."

Your committee, therefore, recommend favorable consideration of the proposed legislation.

Appended is the report of the Federal Works Agency.

FEDERAL WORKS AGENCY,  
Washington, November 19, 1943.

The Honorable ALLEN J. ELLENDER,  
Chairman, Committee on Claims, United States Senate,  
Washington, D. C.

DEAR SENATOR ELLENDER: Reference is made to your letter of October 2, 19 3, enclosing copies of S. 1399, a bill for the relief of Frank Knowles, and to my reply thereto of October 13, 1943.

The bill proposes to appropriate to Frank Knowles, of Montgomery, Ala., the sum of \$110, in full satisfaction of his claim against the United States for compensation for the loss of three typewriters owned by him which were destroyed by fire while on loan to the Work Projects Administration, at Opelika, Ala., on November 21, 1940.

The evidence in the files of this Agency discloses that three Government-owned typewriters which were being used by the Work Projects Administration at Opelika, Ala., were turned over to Frank Knowles for repairs; that, while the typewriters were being repaired, Frank Knowles furnished three Underwood typewriters to the Work Projects Administration for use until the repairs on the Government-owned machines were completed; that, on November 21, 1940, the building in which the Work Projects Administration office at Opelika was located was destroyed by fire; and that the three typewriters owned by Frank Knowles and loaned by him to the Work Projects Administration were also destroyed by the fire.

In a letter to the Work Projects Administration for Alabama, the chief of the fire department, Opelika, Ala., Mr. H. B. Whitaker stated:

"In my opinion the fire was not caused by any employee of the Work Projects Administration.

"The building was being used by various agencies, including Work Projects Administration area office, the local Work Projects Administration and engineers' office, vocational school, Farm Security Administration, Work Projects Administration sewing room, and the auditorium was used by the city of Opelika for electrical demonstrations and display. The entire basement was being used for storage.

"The fire evidently started in the attic near the rear of the auditorium, but I have no idea how it started for it was spreading rapidly when first discovered."

Mr. Knowles filed a claim with the Work Projects Administration, in the sum of \$110, for the loss of the typewriters. The claim was considered under section 20 of the Emergency Relief Appropriation Act, fiscal year 1942 (55 Stat. 396); however, the claim could not be allowed for the reason that the negligence, as required by the act, on the part of an employee of the Work Projects Administration, was not established.

The amount of the claim which appears to be reasonable is established by a certified copy of a letter from the Wholesale Typewriter Co., 155 Sixth Avenue, New York, N. Y., quoting the prices on the three machines as being \$35, \$37.50, and \$37.50, a total of \$110.

This Agency is of the opinion that the fire was an unfortunate occurrence which resulted in the loss of three typewriters to Mr. Knowles through no act of his own. However, since the loss occurred while the typewriters were on loan to, and in the possession of, the Work Projects Administration, this Agency will interpose no objections to the enactment by the Congress of the proposed legislation.

There are enclosed photostatic copies of pertinent papers from the files of this Agency.

The Bureau of the Budget advises me that there would be no objection to the submission of this report to the committee.

Sincerely yours,

PHILIP B. FLEMING,  
Major General, United States Army, Administrator.

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